

## OPINION 852

TANAGRA LINNAEUS, 1764 (AVES): SUPPRESSED UNDER THE  
PLENARY POWERS

**RULING.**—(1) Under the plenary powers:

- (a) the generic name *Tanagra* Linnaeus, 1764, is hereby suppressed for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy;
- (b) the specific name *olivacea*, Desmarest, 1806, as published in the binomen *Euphonia olivacea*, is hereby suppressed for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy;
- (c) it is hereby Ruled that the specific name *episcopus*, *Tanagra*, Linnaeus, 1766, is to be given priority over *virens*, *Loxia*, Linnaeus, 1766, by any zoologist who considers that these names apply to the same species, despite the action of Gyldenstøpe, 1945 (*K. svensk. Vetensk.-Akad. Handl.* (3) 22 : 310–311) acting as first reviser.

(2) The following generic names are hereby placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology with the Name Numbers specified:

- (a) *Euphonia* Desmarest, 1806 (gender: feminine), type-species, by monotypy, *Euphonia olivacea* Desmarest, 1806 (Name No. 1792);
- (b) *Thraupis* Boie, 1826 (gender: feminine), type-species, by monotypy, *Tanagra archiepiscopus* Desmarest, 1806 (Name No. 1793).

(3) The following specific names are hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology with the Name Numbers specified:

- (a) *minuta* Cabanis, 1849, as published in the binomen *Euphonia minuta* (Name No. 2239);
- (b) *ornata* Sparman, 1789, as published in the binomen *Tanagra ornata* (Name No. 2240);
- (c) *episcopus* Linnaeus, 1766, as published in the binomen *Tanagra episcopus* (under the plenary powers to be given precedence over *Loxia virens* Linnaeus, 1766, by any zoologist who considers that these names apply to the same species) (Name No. 2241).

(4) The family-group name THRAUPIDAE Wetmore & Miller, 1926 (type-genus *Thraupis* Boie, 1826) is hereby placed on the Official List of Family-Group Names in Zoology with the Name Number 428.

(5) The following generic names are hereby placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology with the Name Numbers specified:

- (a) *Tanagra* Linnaeus, 1764 (as suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) (a) above) (Name No. 1917);
- (b) *Tanagra* Linnaeus, 1766 (a junior homonym of *Tanagra* Linnaeus, 1764) (Name No. 1918).

(6) The specific name *olivacea* Desmarest, 1806, as published in the binomen

*Euphonia olivacea* (as suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) (b) above) is hereby placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology with the Name Number 895.

(7) The family-group name TANAGRIDAE Bonaparte, 1838 (invalid because based either on a name suppressed under the plenary powers, or on a name rejected as a junior homonym) is hereby placed on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Family-Group Names in Zoology with the Name Number 435.

#### HISTORY OF THE CASE (Z.N.(S.) 1182)

The present case was submitted in December 1956 by the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature of the International Ornithological Congress (Chairman, Finn Salomonsen) as an application requesting the validation of the name *Tanagra* Linnaeus, 1766. An application concerning the validation of *Tanagra episcopus* Linnaeus was received from Dr. Dean Amadon in April 1957. An alternative proposal to suppress both uses of *Tanagra* Linnaeus, and incorporating a proposal for validation of *Tanagra episcopus* was submitted by Prof. E. Mayr, Dr. Alden H. Miller, Dr. R. W. Storer and Dr. E. Stresemann in April 1962.

The application, presenting alternative proposals, was sent to the printer on 4 October 1962 and was published on 12 July 1963 in *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 20 : 296-302. Public Notice of the possible use of the plenary powers in the present case was given in the same part of the *Bulletin* as well as to the other prescribed serial publications (Constitution Art. 12b; *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 21 : 184).

Comments were received from Dr. Kenneth C. Parkes (*Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 21 : 83-84), Dr. Alexander Wetmore, Dr. R. W. Storer and the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature (Chairman, Charles Vaurie) (*Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 21 : 186-188), Mr. E. Eisenmann and Mrs. B. P. Hall (*Bull. zool. Nomencl.* 22 : 12). The proposal for the suppression of *Euphonia olivacea* Desmarest was made by the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature in their comment on the case. Dr. Finn Salomonsen withdrew his support for Alternative A in the original application (in litt. to Prof. Mayr).

#### DECISION OF THE COMMISSION

On 3 May 1966 the Members of the Commission were invited to vote under the Three-Month Rule on Voting Paper (66)29 on the present case. At the request of Prof. Mayr the Voting Paper was divided into three parts. Part 1 requested a vote either for or against the use of the plenary powers to suppress the generic name *Tanagra* Linnaeus, 1764; part 2 requested a vote either for or against a grant of priority to *Tanagra episcopus* over *Loxia virens*; part 3 requested a vote either for or against the suppression of *Euphonia olivacea* Desmarest, 1806. At the close of the prescribed voting period on 3 August 1966 the state of the voting was as follows:

*Part 1.* Affirmative votes—seventeen (17), received in the following order: China, Mayr, Simpson, Holthuis, Bonnet, Boschma, Vokes, Lemche, Uchida, Jaczewski, do Amaral, Forest, Mertens, Ride, Stoll, Kraus, Evans.

Negative votes—four (4): Brinck, Tortonese, Sabrosky, Alvarado.

*Part 2.* Affirmative votes—seventeen (17): China, Mayr, Holthuis, Bonnet, Boschma, Brinck, Vokes, Lemche, Uchida, Jaczewski, do Amaral, Forest, Alvarado, Mertens, Stoll, Kraus, Evans.

Negative votes—four (4): Simpson, Tortonese, Sabrosky, Ride.

*Part 3.* Affirmative votes—twelve (12): China, Mayr, Holthuis, Bonnet, Brinck, Vokes, Lemche, Jaczewski, Forest, Ride, Kraus, Evans.

Negative votes—eight (8): Simpson, Boschma, Uchida, Tortonese, do Amaral, Alvarado, Mertens, Stoll.

Voting Papers not returned—four (4): Binder, Hubbs, Munroe, Obruchev.

Thus whilst the proposals presented in parts 1 and 2 of Voting Paper (66)29 obtained clear majorities in favour of use of the plenary powers, the proposal in part 3, whilst obtaining a majority, did not obtain the two-thirds majority necessary for a plenary powers decision. This proposal was therefore re-submitted.

On 2 January 1968 the Members of the Commission were invited to vote under the Three-Month Rule on Voting Paper (67)52, either for or against the proposals relating to the suppression of *Euphonia olivacea* Desmarest, 1806, and addition of *Euphonia minuta* Cabanis, 1849, to the Official List. This Voting Paper was accompanied by the following new statement of the case prepared by Mr. Eugene Eisenmann, a member of the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature, with the approval of the Chairman of that Committee, in which additional facts were brought to the attention of the Commission.

“It is respectfully asked that the International Commission use its plenary power to validate the specific name *minuta* of Cabanis 1849 and to suppress the name *olivacea* of Desmarest 1806. All important works referring to this tanager since 1935 (and they are numerous) have used Cabanis’ name *minuta*. In fact—and my major field is the study of neo-tropical birds—I do not know of any paper since that date that has adopted Desmarest’s name; prior to 1935 (although there was a period when both names competed) the major reference works all used *minuta* of Cabanis. Desmarest’s name was rejected first as not definitely identifiable as to species (a female was pictured), and later on the ground of homonymy. We believe that the difficult questions of construction of the Code provisions as to homonymy can be usefully avoided by simply maintaining *minuta* in the interest of stability and universality.

“To my knowledge, no ornithologist favours the replacement of *minuta* by *olivacea*. The Standing Committee of the International Ornithological Congress, despite changes of personnel, unanimously supported using the plenary power to maintain the currently used name *minuta* Cabanis. Of the four ornithologists who made the application which included support of *olivacea*, all changed their minds when the facts were brought to their attention. Dr. Ernst Mayr, a Commissioner, voted for *minuta* (contrary to the application he had signed). Dr. Erwin Stresemann and Dr. Robert Storer have expressly authorized me to state that although they signed the application, they now definitely favour *minuta*. Dr. Alden H. Miller died before the matter came to

a vote, but he told me orally that his reason for signing the application was in the hope of clarifying the matter of the family and generic names, and that he had not realized the extent of the usage in favour of *minuta*; in fact he had himself approved the maintenance of *minuta* when he had been a member of the S.C.O.N. prior to 1958.

"It is clear that no gain can come from reviving *olivacea* Desmarest. The only result will be confusion and alteration of well-established usage. Under the rulings of the Congress of Paris *olivacea* was definitely invalidated and *minuta* Cabanis, which everybody was using, became indubitably the valid specific name. Why should this be changed?

"To summarize the arguments in favour of *Euphonia minuta* (Cabanis):

"1. Ornithologists favour maintaining the currently used name *minuta*. Even the applicants who supported *olivacea* Desmarest (but had not themselves used it) now support *minuta*.

"2. The Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature of the International Ornithological Congress, despite changes of personnel, has always consistently and unanimously supported maintaining *minuta*.

"3. Since the publication in 1935 of the tanager volume of Hellmayr's Catalogue of Birds of the Americas, pt. 9, p. 31 (the most authoritative work on neotropical birds) all works known to me referring to this species, *Euphonia minuta* or *Tanagra minuta* (used by Hellmayr), have employed this name. Below are mentioned only the more important books or nomenclatural papers (there are many others):

Zimmer, 1943. Stud. Peruv. Bds., 45, Amer. Mus. Novit., 1225, p. 8.

Pinto, 1944. Catálogo das Aves do Brasil, 2, p. 451.

Phelps and Phelps, 1950. Aves de Venezuela, p. 311 (first ed.)

Meyer de Schauensee, 1951. Birds of the Republic of Colombia.

Haverschmidt, 1955. List of the Birds of Surinam.

Eisenmann, 1955. The Species of Middle American Birds.

Slud, 1964. The Birds of Costa Rica.

Russell, 1964. The Birds of British Honduras.

Meyer de Schauensee, 1964. The Birds of Colombia.

Phelps and Phelps, 1964. Aves de Venezuela (Passeriformes) (2nd ed.)

Snyder, 1966. The Birds of Guyana.

Meyer de Schauensee, 1966. The Species of Birds of South America.

"4. During the 19th century the great works used for nomenclature and neotropical reference all used *minuta* Cabanis. During the early twentieth century both Cabanis' and Desmarest's names were variously current, but the major works continued to employ *minuta*:

Salvin and Godman, 1883. Biologia Centrali-Americana, Aves 1, p. 258.

Slater, 1886. Catalogue of Birds in the British Museum, 11, p. 71.

Ridgway, 1902. The Birds of North and Middle America, pt. 2, p. 23.

Penard and Penard, 1910. Vogel van Guyana, pt. 2, p. 422.

Carriker, 1910. Birds of Costa Rica, p. 869.

Chubb, 1921. Birds of British Guiana, pt. 2, p. 497.

Naumburg, 1930. Birds of Matto Grosso, Brazil, p. 369.

"5. Desmarest's name *olivacea* was rejected for homonymy even by those

who had favoured it, and they accepted *minuta* Cabanis after *Euphonia* was replaced as the generic name by *Tanagra* Linnaeus, 1764, because there was an earlier *Tanagra olivacea* Gmelin, 1789. This rejection was effected as early as 1918 by Oberholser (Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash. 31, p. 26) and later by such good nomenclaturists as Hellmayr (1935, Cat. Bds. Amer. pt. 9, p. 31), Zimmer (1943, Stud. Peruv. Bds., Amer. Mus. Novit., 1225, p. 8), and Pinto (1944, Cat. Aves Brasil, 2, p. 451) on the basis of homonymy. The rulings on homonymy at the International Zoological Congress held at Paris in 1948 (1950, Bull. Zool. Nomencl., 4, pp. 14 et seq.) expressly validated such rejections previously published, even though in the future rejections for secondary homonymy would not be valid unless the rejecting author regarded the two species bearing the same specific name as actually congeneric. The new Code uses essentially the same criteria as the Paris decisions as the test for valid rejection on grounds of secondary homonymy, but unlike those decisions, it does not contain any provision for preserving rejections and substitute names based on a more bibliographic basis for homonymy. A very serious problem would be raised if the Code is interpreted as requiring retroactively an invalidation of substitute names adopted by everyone for decades or scores of years because of the change or clarification of the homonymy principle. It would certainly be unwise for the Commission to decide this question either way without necessity at this time. The maintenance of *minuta* Cabanis on the ground of preserving stability and usage by exercise of the plenary power avoids all problems of homonymy and promotes universality. On the other hand, *olivacea* Desmarest can only be supported on the theory that the homonymy provisions of the Code, retroactively applied, compel its revival in disregard of the unanimous usage of ornithologists since 1935, and the majority usage during the preceding century to employ *minuta* of Cabanis."

At the close of the prescribed voting period on 2 April 1968 the state of the voting was as follows:

Affirmative votes—twenty-one (21), received in the following order: Mayr, China, Holthuis, Boschma, Vokes, do Amaral, Binder, Bonnet, Obruchev, Jaczewski, Lemche, Simpson, Sabrosky, Munroe, Uchida, Tortonese, Brinck, Ride, Mertens, Kraus, Forest.

Negative votes—one (1): Alvarado.

Voting Paper not returned—one (1): Evans.

#### ORIGINAL REFERENCES

The following are the original references for names placed on Official Lists and Indexes by the Ruling given in the present Opinion:

- episcopus*, *Tanagra*, Linnaeus, 1766, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 12) 1 : 316  
*Euphonia* Desmarest, 1806, *Hist. Nat. Tangaras*, livr. 10: pl. 27  
*minuta*, *Euphonia*, Cabanis, 1849, in Schomburgk, *Reisen Brit. Guiana* 3 : 671  
*olivacea*, *Euphonia*, Desmarest, 1806, *Hist. Nat. Tangaras*, livr. 10: pl. 27  
*ornata*, *Tanagra*, Sparrman, 1789, *Mus. Carls.* (4) : pl. 95  
*Tanagra* Linnaeus, 1764, *Mus. Adolph. Frid.* 2, Prodr.: 30  
*Tanagra* Linnaeus, 1766, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 12) 1 : 313

TANAGRIDAE Bonaparte, 1838, *Geogr. Comp. List of Birds of Europe and North America*: 35

THRAUPIDAE Wetmore & Miller, 1926, *Auk* 43 : 346

*Thraupis* Boie, 1826, *Isis* (Oken) 1826 : 974.

#### CERTIFICATE

We certify that the votes cast on Voting Papers (66)29 and (67)52 were cast as set out above, that the proposals contained in those Voting Papers have been duly adopted under the plenary powers, and that the decision so taken, being the decision of the International Commission, is truly recorded in the present Opinion No. 852.

R. V. MELVILLE  
*Secretary*

*International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature*

W. E. CHINA  
*Assistant Secretary*  
*London*  
25 April 1968